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BPS/OL

The House-passed bill entitled "The Public Buildings Amendments of 1972" contains most of the provisions of S. 1736.

The bill establishes a fund to finance the acquisition, construction, alteration, maintenance, operation, and protection of all public buildings.

The bill would require Government departments and agencies to pay user charges for space they occupy in GSA-operated buildings. Such user charges would be deposited into the fund. GSA would be able to use the assets of the fund to finance real property management and all aspects of the public buildings program.

When the bill is implemented, each agency would have to budget for its space needs just as it now budgets for its other administration costs. Such rates and charges for space and services shall approximate commercial charges. The rates charged the agency for such services shall be affixed by the administrator and approved by the Office of Management and Budget. "Space and services" include all furnished services, operations, protection, space, quarters, maintenance, repair, or other facilities.

The bill specifically states that GSA is not precluded from providing special services not included in the standard level user charge on a reimbursable basis.

The net effect of the House-passed bill appears to be that space users will pay a rental charge which will include a standard level of services. All other services such as partition changes and the like would be on a reimbursable basis. Any upgrading or additions to the standard level of services provided would be on a reimbursable basis.

At the present time, GSA regulations provide that they will accept special levels of maintenance and service on a reimbursable basis; however, their staffing, being subject to budgetary and manpower limitations, is not always adequate to accommodate the desired service. This is subject to negotiation. Their standard level of service fluctuates according to their budget and manpower

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The variances between the House and Senate-passed versions of the bill basically are House "add ons" such as United States Postal Service property disposals; provide House use of the Congressional Hotel for office space; and provision of 1 1/2 million dollars for FY 1972 for the public costs of maintaining and operating the nonperforming arts functions of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Because of the inclusion of these variances, the final bill will require resolution by joint conference of the House and Senate and subsequent repassage.